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DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

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I. LAND AND PEOPLE

A. Land

1. Korea, situated in the north-eastern part of the Asian continent, consists of the Korean peninsula and 4,198 islands around it. Its total area is 222,209,231 square kilometres, of which mountains constitute 79.87 per cent and plains 20.13 per cent. It is sea-bound on three sides.

2. Korea was liberated from the colonial rule of the Japanese imperialists on 15 August 1945. It was divided into north and south at 38° north latitude at first and after the Korean War at the military demarcation line defined in the Armistice Agreement as the boundary. The area of the country over which the DPRK's sovereignty is exercised is 122,762,338 square kilometres, of which the mainland is 122,457,385 square kilometres and the islands are 304,953 square kilometres.

B. People, language and religion

3. The DPRK is a homogenous national State. The Koreans have lived on the Korean territory and created time-honoured history and culture from the early stages of human development such as the early, middle and later periods of the palaeolithic era.

4. As of 31 December 1996, the population of the DPRK was 22,114,000, of which the male population was 10,782,000 and the female population 11,332,000. The capital city, Pyongyang, had 2.9 million people.

5. The language of the Koreans is Korean. The Korean language was created and has been developed by the Korean people through a long historical period, and is characterized by its homogeneity and purity. The Korean language, the sole national language of the Korean people, is spoken throughout the whole territory of Korea.

6. The DPRK has no State religion. The State guarantees freedom of religion. There are people who believe in Buddhism, Christianity, Roman Catholicism and Chondoism in the country.

II. GENERAL POLITICAL STRUCTURE

A. Brief political history

7. Korea, which was formed as a State before the thirtieth century B.C., developed itself creating its own culture. In the nineteenth century, however, the feudal State of Korea was gravely weakened by the corruption and incompetence of the feudal rulers.

8. Japan illegally fabricated the "Ulsa 5-point Treaty" in November 1905, the "Jongmi 7-point Treaty" in 1907 and the "Korea-Japan Amalgamation Treaty" in 1910 to usurp the diplomatic and domestic rights and turn Korea completely into its colony.

9. The Korean people waged a vigorous revolutionary struggle against the Japanese imperialist aggressors for 20 years under the leadership of the respected President Kim Il Sung. The Korean people achieved the historic cause of national restoration on 15 August 1945.

10. After liberation, Korea was divided in half owing to the interference of foreign forces, and the two sides traversed diametrically different courses.

11. In the north, the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea was established on 8 February 1946 based on the local power organs formed in all areas on the initiative of the people, democratic reforms were carried out and a genuine people's democratic system set up. And by the first democratic elections of historic significance, the People's Committee of North Korea was formed in February 1947 and the transition to socialism began.

12. In an effort to check the crisis of national break-up, general elections for a unified central Government were held throughout the whole territory of the north and south of Korea in August 1948 and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, representing the interests of all the Korean people, was founded on 9 September 1948. The founding of the DPRK meant the advent of an independent people's power of a new type and was a historic proclamation of the birth of Juche Korea.

13. The Republic has made an onward march through trying ordeals under the Juche idea.

14. The Korean people won the three-year Fatherland Liberation War and defended the Republic with honour. The Korean people completed the socialist transformation of the relations of production in towns and farm villages in only four to five years after the war. As a result, an anthropocentric socialist system in the Korean style was established.

15. Today, the Korean people, under the seasoned leadership of the dear Comrade Kim Jong Il, are making strenuous efforts to abolish all sorts of backwardness and make great progress in the ideological, technical, cultural and other fields upholding the banner of the Juche idea, to add glory to the socialist system and to achieve the country's independent peaceful reunification, the supreme task confronting the nation.

B. General political structure

16. The political system of the DPRK is socialist democratic republicanism.

17. The power belongs to all the working people, including workers, peasants and working intellectuals. The working people exercise power through the Supreme People's Assembly and local people's assemblies at all levels, their representative organs.

18. The system of State organs is composed of the system of power organs, the system of administrative organs and the system of judicial and procuratorial organs.

1. System of power organs

19. The system of power organs consists of the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA), the Central People's Committee (CPC), local people's assemblies and local people's committees.

20. The SPA is the highest power organ of the Republic. Legislative power is exercised by the SPA and the Standing Committee of the SPA. The SPA is constituted by deputies elected on the principle of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot. It is elected for a term of five years. The permanent body of the SPA when it is not in session is its Standing Committee. The Standing Committee does legislative work in the intervals between sessions of the SPA and is accountable to the SPA for its work.

21. The President of the DPRK is the head of State and represents the State power. He exercises unified control and direction over all State activities such as politics, the economy, culture and foreign relations. He is elected by the SPA and his term of office is the same as that of the SPA.

22. The CPC is the highest leadership body of State power. The CPC is headed by the President of the DPRK. The CPC consists of the President, Vice-Presidents, the Secretary-General and members who are all elected by the SPA. Its term of office is the same as that of the SPA. The CPC ensures sovereign guidance to and supervision over all State affairs and State organs under the direct leadership of the President of the Republic. The CPC is accountable to the SPA for its work.

23. The people's assembly of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), city (or district) and county is the local organ of State power. The local people's assembly consists of deputies elected on the principle of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot and its term of office is four years. The local people's assembly exercises sovereignty within the given area as a local representative organ of the people. The local power organs when the local people's assemblies are not in session are the people's committees of the province (or municipality under direct central authority), city (or district) and county. The local people's committee is constituted by the chairman, vice-chairmen, secretary and members and its term of office is the same as that of the corresponding people's assembly. The local people's committee exercises the function of sovereign guidance and supervision when the corresponding people's assembly is not in session, is guided by the corresponding people's assembly and by senior people's assemblies or committees and is accountable to them.

2. System of administrative organs

24. The system of administrative organs consists of the Administration Council (AC) and local administrative and economic committees.

25. The AC is the administrative and executive body of the highest organ of State power and works under the guidance of the President of the Republic and the CPC. The AC consists of the Premier, Vice-Premiers, chairmen, ministers and other members and its term of office is the same as that of the SPA. The AC organizes and executes all the administrative and economic

work of the State. The AC is accountable to the SPA, the President of the Republic and the CPC for its work.

26. The administrative and economic committee of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), city (or district) and county is the administrative and executive unit of the local organ of State power. It is composed of the chairman, vice-chairmen, secretary and members and its term of office is the same as that of the corresponding people's assembly. It organizes and carries out all administrative and economic work in the given area, is accountable to the people's assembly and people's committee at the corresponding level for its work and is subordinate to the higher administrative and economic committees and to the AC.

3. System of judicial and procuratorial organs

27. The system of judicial and procuratorial organs consists of courts and public prosecutors offices.

28. The system of judicial organs is composed of the Central Court, the court of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), the people's court and the special court. The courts of the Republic are constituted by judges and people's assessors who are elected by State power organs at all levels. The President of the Central Court is elected by the SPA, and its judges and people's assessors by the Standing Committee of the SPA. Judges and people's assessors of local courts are elected by the corresponding local people's assemblies. Judges of the special court are appointed by the Central Court and its people's assessors elected by soldiers of the unit concerned or by employees at their meetings. The Central Court is the highest judicial organ of the Republic and is accountable to the SPA, the President of the Republic and the CPC for its work. The local courts are accountable to their respective people's assemblies.

29. The system of procuratorial organs consists of the Central Public Prosecutors Office, the public prosecutors office of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), city (or district) and county and the special public prosecutors office. The Prosecutor General of the Central Public Prosecutors Office is appointed by the SPA and the public prosecutors of various levels by the Central Public Prosecutors Office. The procuratorial organs supervise the observance of laws. Investigation and prosecution are conducted under the unified direction of the Central Public Prosecutors Office, and all public prosecutors offices are subordinate to their higher offices and the Central Public Prosecutors Office. The Central Public Prosecutors Office is accountable to the SPA, the President of the Republic and the CPC.

III. GENERAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH HUMAN RIGHTS ARE PROTECTED

A. Legislative measures taken for human rights protection

30. The DPRK regards human rights as the independent rights which people ought to exercise as social beings in political, economic, cultural and every other sphere of social life and actively strives to protect and realize them.

31. The respected President Kim Il Sung defined man as the most precious being by embodying the Juche idea that man is the master of everything and decides everything, and advanced the Juche-oriented idea of human rights that man, an independent being, should be freed from all kinds of social subordinations and inequalities and enjoy equal rights.

32. The Juche-oriented idea of human rights was embodied in the Ten-point Programme of the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland published in May 1936, when the anti-Japanese armed struggle was being waged. With a view to ensuring completely the social and political rights of all people, article 6 of this Programme stipulates: "Freedom of speech, the press, assembly and association shall be realized, the Japanese terrorist rule and the remnants of feudal ideas opposed and all political prisoners released." And on human equality and respect of all people, article 7 states: "Discriminatory status systems and other inequalities shall be abolished, human equality of sex, nation, religion, etc. guaranteed, social position of women improved and the dignity of females respected."

33. In order to provide social, economic and cultural rights, the Programme and the Declaration of the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland advanced the "adoption of popular and democratic policies of economy and culture", "abolition of slave labour and education", enforcement of "free compulsory education" and "eight-hour working day", "improvement of working conditions and raise of wage" and "relief of the unemployed masses."

34. After liberation, the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea set forth the programme for defending the people's rights and interests by the proclamation of the Twenty-point Platform to be pursued by the democratic government that would be set up soon.

35. In accordance with the Platform, the Committee took various legislative measures for ensuring people their rights and freedom.

36. For the democratization of the judicature as well as the democratic socio-political reform, the committee formulated the Rules of the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea (6 March 1946), the Basic Principles of the Composition and Function of the Judicial Board, the Court, and the Public Procurators' Office of the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea (6 March 1946), the Rules of the Criminal Justice of the North Korean Judicial Organs (14 May 1946) and the Law on the Criminal Hearing by the Public Procurators' Office and the Preliminary Examination or Security Organs of North Korea (20 June 1946).

37. The legislation for securing democratic socio-political reform includes the Law on the Agrarian Reform in North Korea (5 March 1946), the labour Law for the Factory and Office Workers in North Korea (24 June 1946), the Law on the Equality of Sexes (30 July 1946), etc.

38. In order to secure the democratization of social and cultural life, the Committee enacted the Law on the Protection of Life, Health, Freedom and Honour (24 January 1947), the Law on the Abolition of the Remnants of the Feudal Customs (24 January 1947), the Law on the Protection of Private Property (24 January 1947) an the Law on Crimes against Public Health (24 January 1947).

39. The People's Committee of North Korea, after its establishment in February 1947, approved democratic laws including the law on the Agrarian Reform and adopted new laws and regulations to consolidate by law the achievements of democratic reform.

40. The DPRK, after its foundation in September 1948, adopted its Constitution (9 September 1948) to fix and reaffirm by law the achievements and successes and the rights of the citizens in the sectors of political, economic, social and cultural life.

41. The DPRK took measures to provide people with every human right by promulgating the Law on Composition of the Court (1 March 1950), the Criminal Law (3 March 1950), the Criminal Procedures Act (3 March 1950) and other related laws.

42. The DPRK adopted the Socialist Constitution on 27 December 1972 in line with the established socialist system and, in April 1992, amended it to consolidate the successes of the socialist construction and to better protect the genuine democratic freedom and rights of the citizens.

43. The DPRK constructed many relevant laws on the basis of the Socialist Constitution.

44. The DPRK instituted anew the Criminal Law and the Criminal Procedures Act on 19 December 1974 and revised them on 5 February 1987 and on 15 January 1992 respectively.

45. The DPRK adopted the Civil Procedures Act (10 January 1976), the Civil Law (5 September 1990) and the Family Law (24 October 1990).

46. The DPRK also enacted the Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children (29 April 1976), the Land Law (29 April 1977), the Socialist Labour Law (18 April 1978), the Public Health Law (3 April 1980), the Law on the Protection of the Environment (9 April 1986), the Law on Science and Technology (8 December 1988), the Law on City Administration (29 January 1992), the Commercial Law (29 January 1992), etc. so that citizens may better enjoy their economic, social and cultural rights.

B. General legislative structure for human rights protection

47. In the DPRK, the State provides all citizens with true democratic rights, freedom and a happy material and cultural life. The main bodies for the provision of democratic rights and freedom to the people are the people's committees and the administrative and economic committees at all levels. Judicial, procuratorial and public security organs also assume the mission of protecting human rights. The work is done by the public organizations such as the Democratic Lawyers' Association and the bar association.

48. There is a compensation system for the citizens whose rights are infringed. Citizens may appeal to the people's power organs, or judicial or other State organs when their rights are violated. The State organs examine the case in accordance with due procedures and have the victim properly compensated if the appeal proves to be right. Unfairly detained or punished people are compensated according to the Civil Law which provides that an organ, enterprise or

organization is responsible if any of its members has harmed another's property or person while on duty.

49. The rights provided by the international instruments on human rights are reliably protected by the Socialist Constitution and other laws in the DPRK. No right is either restricted or reduced.

50. The DPRK Government makes every effort to implement the international human rights instruments with credit.

51. The provisions of the instruments are applied either by being turned into domestic laws and regulations or directly.

52. The DPRK has recognized the rights contained in the instruments in its laws and regulations as well as in the Socialist Constitution, and has taken or is taking practical measures to realize them. As a result, the rights are well protected. DPRK citizens are sufficiently ensured true democratic freedom and rights. Non-discrimination is required by all the provisions of the Socialist Constitution that are related to citizens' rights.

53. Foreigners staying or residing in the DPRK also enjoy legal rights.

54. After ratifying several international human rights instruments, the DPRK amended and supplemented the Socialist Constitution and revised or adopted the Criminal Law, the Criminal Procedures Act, the Civil Law, the Family Law and others reflecting the requirements of the instruments.

IV. INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY

55. The Government took measures to inform the State organs, public organizations and the masses of the idea of the international human rights instruments. On the occasion of Human Rights Day (10 December) and other international anniversaries, broadcasts and publications actively disseminate relevant information and lectures, short courses and seminars are organized. The texts of the instruments have been translated into Korean and disseminated to the people's power organs, administrative, economic, cultural organs and public organizations, and are taught in the regular higher educational institutions. The Compilation of International Instruments on Human Rights, the Compilation of International Instruments on the Rights of the Child, etc. have been published in Korean and are used by the State organs, public organizations and people.

56. Great attention was paid to the preparation of the report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A group was organized with jurists and experts of the State organs and public organizations for the preparation of the report. The materials for the report were officially collected from the State organs and public organizations at all levels. The draft of the report was sent to various State organs and public organizations for completion through debate. And upon the submission of the report to the United Nations, copies and written information were disseminated to people's power organs at all levels, educational establishments and public organizations so that they could be used by the officials concerned as a reference for the promotion and the protection of the rights and interests of the child.

Annex

STATISTICAL TABLES

Table 1
Population and composition by province

(1993)

Rank	Province	Population (000)	% of total
1	S. Pyongan	2 861	13.97
2	Pyongyang	2 741	13.36
3	S. Hamgyong	2 732	13.31
4	N. Pyongan	2 437	11.88
5	N. Hamgyong	2 060	10.04
6	S. Hwanghae	2 010	9.80
7	N. Hwanghae	1 512	7.37
8	Kangwon	1 304	6.36
9	Jagang	1 152	5.52
10	Nampo	731	3.56
11	Ryanggang	638	3.11
12	Kaesong	334	1.63

Table 2
Life expectancy by sex in urban and rural areas

(1993)

Area	Both	Male	Female
Urban	73.3	68.5	77.2
Rural	72.7	68.3	76.1
Country	73.2	68.4	76.8

Table 3

Infant mortality rate for urban and rural areas and by sex, per 1,000 births

(1993)

Area	Both	Male	Female
Urban	11.76	12.72	10.75
Rural	16.56	17.68	15.39
Country	13.88	14.91	12.80

Table 4

Crude death rate by sex in urban and rural areas, per 1,000 persons

(1993)

Area	Both	Male	Female
Urban	5.16	5.99	4.40
Rural	6.48	7.21	5.85
Country	5.68	6.46	4.97

Table 5

Age-specific fertility rate, per 1,000 women and in urban and rural areas

(1993)

Age	Total	%	Urban areas	%	Rural areas	%
15-19	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
20-24	49.11	11.20	41.02	10.47	61.49	11.97
25-29	265.26	60.48	242.79	61.98	300.09	58.42
30-34	100.86	23.00	89.35	22.81	119.62	23.29
35-39	19.08	4.35	15.37	3.92	26.23	5.11
40-44	3.18	0.73	2.35	0.60	4.72	0.92
45-49	1.12	0.26	0.87	0.22	1.57	0.31
Total	438.61	100.00	391.75	100.00	513.72	100.00
Composite fertility rate	2.19		1.96		2.57	

Table 6
Age composition of the population, by sex (%)

(1993)

Age	Both	Male	Female
0-4	10.1767	11.0766	9.3738
5-9	9.0954	9.8948	8.3820
10-14	8.6107	9.3490	7.9518
65-69	2.4659	1.8075	3.0534
70-74	1.6545	1.0640	2.1813
75-79	0.9125	0.5097	1.2719
80-84	0.3963	0.1964	0.5747
85-89	0.1015	0.0368	0.1592
90-94	0.0200	0.0050	0.0333
95-99	0.0040	0.0004	0.0072
100-	0.0005	0	0.0009

Table 7
Population in urban and rural areas (%)

(1996)

Urban area	Rural area
60.2	39.8

Table 8
Proportion of urban population in the DPRK and the world, 1954-1994

Year	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1994
DPRK	* 17.7	40.6	53.9	57.2	60.2	** 60.2
World	29.1	34.1	37.2	39.8	42.7	44.8
Developed countries	53.8	60.5	66.6	70.2	72.7	74.7
Developing countries	16.9	22.1	25.5	29.3	33.9	37.0
Asia	16.4	21.5	23.9	26.6	29.9	34.1
Europe	56.3	60.9	66.7	70.3	73.1	73.3

* 1953 ** 1966

Table 9
Households

(1993)

Total number	Family households	Collective households	Average size (persons)
4 813 195	4 802 030 (99.7%)	11 165 (0.3%)	4.2

Table 10
Dynamics of numbers of households, 1980-1993

Year	1980	1985	1990	1993
No. households (thousand)	3 413	3 833	4 398	4 802
% growth	100	112.3	128.9	140.7

Table 11
Number of technicians and experts, per 1,000 persons

(1993)

Category	Both sexes	Male	Female	Female (%)
Engineer	376	308	69	18.24
Para-engineer	453	275	178	39.37
Technician	829	583	247	29.78
Expert	535	305	230	42.99
Semi-expert	426	143	283	66.49
Total experts	961	448	513	53.41
Total	1 790	1 030	760	42.46

Table 12
Gross national product and per capita income, 1993 and 1996

	GNP (million US$)	PCI (US$)
1993	20 882	991
1996	10 528	479

Table 13
External debt, 1996

External debt (million US$)	3 609

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